



News Release

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Minnesota Legislature passes confidentiality bill

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Thanks to the help of the livestock industry, the Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH) is pleased to announce that the Minnesota legislature has passed a bill to ensure confidentiality of premises and animal data information collected as part of the National Animal Identification System (NAIS).

The BAH, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA), and the Minnesota Extension Service are working together to register all Minnesota livestock premises (farms, auction markets, processing plants, etc.) by the end of the year. The state has received funding from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to implement a premises identification system and to begin work on livestock identification in the state. In the event of a disease outbreak, the goal of the NAIS is to be able to trace potentially exposed livestock within 48 hours.

Minnesota's voluntary NAIS program has already assigned over 7,300 national premises identification numbers. The passing of this confidentiality bill is a great advancement for the future establishment of an animal identification system in Minnesota and can only help the program grow said NAIS Project Manager Dave Wiklund.

"This legislation will go a long way towards protecting our producer's private information," Wiklund said. "I expect this to boost our NAIS program in Minnesota. I'm thankful that so many Minnesota producers are interested helping us develop a NAIS program that will work for our state."

The original legislative authors of this bill were Representative Greg Davids and Senator Rod Skoe. The final bill reads as follows:

The following data collected and maintained by the Board of Animal Health related to registration and identification of premises and animals under chapter 35, are classified as private or nonpublic: 1) the names and addresses; 2) the location of the premises where animals are kept; and 3) the identification number of the premises or animal.

The Board of animal Health may disclose data collected under paragraph (a) to any person, agency, or to the public if the board determines that the access will aid in the law enforcement process or the protection of public or animal health safety.

For more information on NAIS, go to the Board's website at www.bah.state.mn.us or call the Board office at 651-296-2942, ext. 17.